

The King of Glory

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[0 : 0 0] that this psalm would have been used by David and the priest as a liturgy when the ark was brought back from the ark languished in this kind of small town for a couple of decades and and at some point David brought it back into Jerusalem to be installed in the temple and they said this is the psalm that would have been used and we'll talk more about that in fact we'll actually uh when I was studying this I was so taken by the backstory here I thought what can I use as examples to illustrate the main points of it I thought I'm going to use examples of stories in the bible that revolve around the ark of the covenant so one story we won't be talking about just so you know is the one where the ark is discovered but it's stolen by the Nazis to use as a super weapon against the allies but then is rescued by an American professor and actually one of the most difficult things in preparing this sermon was convincing Jordan that that was an apocryphal story now let's get to the passage so we will let's look at the passage in sections verses one and two the earth is the lord is the and the fullness thereof and the world and those who dwell therein he's founded it upon seas and established it on rivers great words and you read it and it sounds quite poetic and they sound like nice words and there's quite a bounce to the words but there's so much more than sort of nice poetry saying nice things about god it's it's actually making a huge theological statement here so we'll dig into it it starts by saying that everything is god everything's god's other people are his the dirt is his it's all his and so what it's trying to do here is it's trying to convey the extent of god's ownership his rule which is absolute so my house my garden god owns those god is the lord over my buddhist neighbor god owns north korea i mean we could just go on and on it's all gods and verse two follows very logically from verse one it says god owns it all because he created it all like a songwriter owns his songs god made it it's his now the way it's stated is kind of unusual and there's more than meets the eye here just remind you of what it says again he founded it upon the seas he established it upon the rivers i mean why not just say he just he made it all it's really great why why mention the seas and the rivers well there was this common uh ancient near eastern uh creation story involving these two powerful gods called yam and nahar and uh you can sort of google the story it's sort of reads a bit like a soap opera there's a you know there's a battle involving yam and nahar i think there's a bit of romance and in the end there's the world basically and uh according to the mesopotamian myth that's how the world came about so the nations surrounding israel they were terrified of these two gods yam and nahar because they were involved in the creation story battle thing and now here's the reveal the hebrew words yam and nahar how do you translate those you don't want to guess there sea and river for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers god is saying yam yam shmam you know there is there is one lord he created everything and your sea gods your river gods it's just liquid it's just liquid and i i may i just i just made the world by sticking dirt on your gods it's this it's basically a full frontal assault on the idol worship of the day there is one lord he made everything it's his moving on have a look at verse three and four slide your eyes over there the next logical question stated and it is quite logical if it's true if god made it all who can be

in the presence of this holy creator god and the answer is the one who four things clean hands pure heart who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear falsely this is not an arbitrary list i think it's quite a sobering list and it what it does is it addresses all aspects of our life it addresses our whole life the clean hands it's clean hands it's talking about we do and a pure heart that's the interior life a good example is pontius pilate you remember when when pontius pilate sent jesus to the cross you remember he washes his hands i wash my hands of this not my fault not my problem technically technically he had clean hands but he had an impure heart three do not lift up your soul to what is false it's talking about worship and the word false that means empty you can't come to god if you've sort of you can't be in relationship with god and at the same time basically

give your life over to vacuous things the things which are this thin and we'll talk more about that shortly last one don't swear deceitfully don't lie so who can come into the presence of this holy created god the one who has pure thoughts pure words pure actions and pure motives now right now you might be thinking goodness i'm in trouble i'm in trouble here because who's that person well there's no one but jesus but the point i think of this quite sobering list is not to prevent the pilgrim from entering the tabernacle into the presence of god the point is to ensure that when this person does it it's with a pursuit of holiness in mind so passage says the person the generation that is seeking after the lord because you're not going to earn your place in god's presence by obeying the rules no verses five and six salvation and righteousness you're right to get in there that is given to you by god it is a gift from god so of course given that gift you seek after him and you desire to live well uh your with your whole life because god has saved you now let me illustrate that point with a great story about the ark from one samuel that helps to sort of illustrate this whole thing here okay so the ark of the covenant do you know what that is that's you know it's basically a big box maybe i don't know like two feet by four feet and uh covered in gold two solid gold angels cherubim on the top and it housed some very important things a couple of very important things the most famous of which was the ten commandments written on stone tablets with the finger of god but it wasn't just really fancy or important religious furniture let me tell you why i say that we would not survive if we're exposed to god's like 100 god's glory bam we wouldn't we wouldn't survive so the ark was this very special thing that god gave his people in the old testament a way for people to experience some of god's glory a way for god to be with his people in a special way without being crushed by his holiness so the story one samuel six if you want to read it yourself or sort of four to six uh so you've got israel and a little country surrounded by the philistines and the philistines were um uh expansionist that's that's a nice way of saying it and uh anyway they went to war as you do this is about 1100 bc and and uh they got defeated the israelites were defeated by the philistines and they were quite surprised by this fact this was a surprise to them and they were thinking how did this happen and they go and somebody goes i know what didn't happen we didn't have the ark we should have rolled out the ark with us then it would have been you know no problem so anyway so they have another battle as you do and they they this time they bring the ark with them so they've got their battle camp and they bring the ark into the middle of the camp and the philistines get wind of the fact that the ark of the covenant is with the israelites they completely freak out but they don't take off they think well here's what we'll do we'll just you know you've got to die sometime let's just let's just let's just uh i'm sure i think of an american phrase let's give it a college try and and go and just go out go out with a bang basically we'll just go out with the bang we're going to get killed they've got the ark right anyway so that's what they do they go in there they give it a college try and they give it a really good crack and they win the philistines beat the israelites again and not only do they beat them they capture the ark so the israelites goodness where did they go wrong well they didn't pray and they didn't seek god about the battle they just thought oh let's just roll out the let's just let's just roll out the let's just roll out the cool stuff and you know we'll just take it with us into battle and and god will just sort it out and it didn't happen and they were hugely shocked by this i'm not trying to disparage the ark the ark was a great gift to the israelites it was god's special presence among them but they trusted it more than they trusted god i had a friend of mine got engaged recently so imagine me getting engaged and this is a lovely lady i'm getting engaged and i give you the engagement ring and uh jordana takes it we'll call her jordana takes it this is fantastic i love it i love it takes off runs away with the ring it's like having getting an engagement ring but valuing the ring over the spouse that's what israel did israel did they valued the gift this precious beautiful wonderful symbol that god had given them more than a symbol valued it above god anyway the story goes on so the philistines are feeling fantastic about this very surprised when they're feeling fantastic about the fact that they got israel's most precious kind of thing and uh anyway so what they do is they have this temple it's dedicated to a god called dagon who was very popular god back in the days and uh they put the ark in in the uh in dagon's temple so there's dagon i'm sorry jordan there's dagon they put the ark they put the ark right there they come back the next day surprised to find dagon flat on his face in front of the ark and they go what's what's happened here dagon's lying prostate to the ark so they prop him up the next night the same thing happened it's a great you've got to read this story i'm telling i'm sort of telling you it but you should read it uh next night the same thing happens but dagon falls with such force snaps the head and arms off and so they try and fix him again and of course now if dagon could speak what would he say i'm just a tree what are you doing somebody just carved a stupid face into an old tree that's all i am don't you

know don't you know what's in the in the in the in the ark of the covenant here it's the stone tablets it's the commandments of god and the first one says you will have no god performing so the philistines don't know what to do because because the ark god keeps breaking their gods so uh which is a you know that's god's business i think that wasn't it breaking breaking other gods so philistines send the ark out to all the cities they think well let's put it on tour you know like when somebody wins a cup like a rugby world cup or something they tour it around the cities terrible idea as it turns out uh so they tour the the ark around all the cities and philistines and everywhere where the ark goes uh the people get tumors and they get infestations of rodents so they keep moving it around it's like this this bomb that's leaking glory and they're just trying to keep moving it eventually they have to send it back to israel okay why did i tell you that story what's it got to do with the psalm 24 here well i think it illustrates really well the first six verses mainly there is one god there is one god and any attempt to squeeze any other god into your life into this kind of the sacred space in your heart where only god can belong only god belongs folks that is not going to end well and this passage what it did you know yam and the heart it confronted the gods of the age and we must let it confront the gods of of our age because you put another god in there another god in your heart that's not the god of jacob it's not the lord almighty folks it's not going to go well for you let me let me just give you a few examples here and this is something i've sort of read before and i'm paraphrasing uh somebody else but the god that that is the wrong god it could be a good thing could be a positive thing but it's a category area you've made it the ultimate thing in your life instead of a wonderful gift like the ark was if your god is your spouse you make that the ultimate thing in your life you'll end up being unhealthily dependent jealous and controlling if your god is your career you'll either become a workaholic or really boring or if you're not very good at it just kind of depressed if god is money you'll be jealous of others that have more or unethical in your approach to getting it if your god is pleasure you'll become addicted to something if it's approval you'll be constantly hurt by criticism if your god is something like quite noble like the pursuit of social justice which is a wonderful thing but if you make it your god you'll divide the world into the good people and the bad people and ironically you'll let yourself be controlled by your enemies because without them you've got no purpose if you center your life around the trappings of religion or morality well it'll go one of two ways if you manage to live up to your standards you'll be self-righteous and proud and cruel and if you don't live up to your standards you'll just go through life with crippling guilt see any other attempt to get another god into your life into that sacred space but only god belongs the ultimate place in your heart it's it's not going to go well back to the ark story for the israelites it was the ark for them it was a magic box it was it was they basically wanted to use the box to further their own objectives their idolatry was an idolatry of the self i mean god was kind of in the mix but more of as as a facilitator for what they wanted to use to use a sort of modern phrase they were photobombing christianity they were trying to make it all about them by jumping in the picture hey it's all about me now we don't want to do that now the goal is this is we want to be people that glorify god not ourselves we went about to join the pilgrims in verses 7 to 10 and say who's the king of the who's the king of glory it's the lord it's only the lord in our life it is nothing else the thing about verses 7 to 10 when you read them and they're so lovely is that you find as you read them there is a um there is a joy about these verses you can imagine people shouting them out who's the king of the who's the king of glory the lord of hosts he is the king of glory there's a joy about this there's another great story in in 2 samuel this time 6 about the ark and uh let me remind you of it before we finish here so it's it's just been returned from the philistines and it's sitting in this in this family's nice family's living room and it's going to small town for a while a couple of decades and david wants to return it to jerusalem to put it into the temple return god to the center symbolically return god to the center of the city so he organizes this big party and they're bringing it in and they're pulling it on a cart with an ox and there's music and there's dancing and it's all going really well until there's a dead guy beside there beside the ark and what had happened is uh the ox had sort of tripped a bit and the ark started to fall and and so this guy is uh reached out to steady the ark and uh he died when he touched it he was killed when he touched it and the 64 dollar question is why why did uzah die well in the book of numbers it's laid out very specific specifically how you transport the ark it had to be covered you know it's not a spectacle had to be carried there were these special rings he carried on these poles had to be carried by levites which is the priestly class couldn't touch it of course and in the beginning of the story this story here david doesn't he disregards all these rules and the rules weren't arbitrary arbitrary they were not the rules of a grumpy old man sort of being protective of his special things don't touch leave it alone don't you

know it's not none of that the rules around the ark were a kindness the rules were there to protect god's people like we've said when you come into the presence of the ark you're experiencing the very real presence of god which means and here's the important thing you're being confronted by god's holiness and these guys were not taking the holiness of god seriously they were playing fast and loose with the presence of god in their life do you know what that's like playing fast and loose with the presence of god in your life treating it casually and it didn't end well now david learned from this and he brought the ark in again and he did it properly this time in fact one of the things it says he does is every six steps he makes a sacrifice and he makes a sacrifice recognizing that there's this giant chasm between god and his people but that god has made a provision for that and what comes of that well you read the story it says joy joy comes of that when we really understand the chasm and we really understand the provision that god has made for us there is a dance about our lives and that's what that's what david does it says that before getting to the temple david dances in front of the ark all the way there and it says in 2 samuel it says he dances with all his might and he dances with just his ephod on which is his loincloth and the detail is very telling here it says he strips down to just a loincloth so he's probably in his kingly regalia and he gets all of the stuff that he's wearing that says i'm in charge he gets rid of it and david has written this psalm psalm 24 for this occasion for this very occasion who is the king of glory it's not him it's not david who is the king of glory the lord of hosts he is the king of glory the god of jacob i love this psalm i think it's just fantastic and when you put it into its context it brings together these two things which we should always hold together in our relationship with god and that is uh fearfulness and great gladness and i see it in this passage that we must pursue god with holiness we must pursue holiness in our life [20 : 16] recognize he has made provision for us and shout who is the king of glory now how do we view this through the lens of the new testament well very simply and i'll finish here what god did symbolically and temporarily with the ark he does permanently with jesus so the ark is the shadow it can't contain all of god's glory all of his glory is revealed in jesus you know if the ark is the engagement ring the ark is the symbol jesus is the reality psalm 24 all of god's promises of psalm 24 are revealed in jesus jesus is the lord of all in verses 1 to 2 he lived the perfect life required in 3 and 4 so that god will achieve salvation for us which he promises in verse 5 and 6 and is the king of glory verses 7 to 10 that we proclaim together amen